The

Non-Subscribing Presbyterian

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Notes of the Month.

The *pro re nata* meeting of the Church held last month to receive the report of the Laymen's Committee on the increase of ministerial incomes, and to consider a scheme suggested by the Moderator, was unanimous in its conclusions. Believing that a good start had been made, it decided that the individual congregations should be encouraged to do their utmost for their at present inadequately-paid ministers. Secondly, it approved in principle the Moderator's scheme for permanently increasing the Sustentation Fund, and elected a Committee to apply the scheme to meet the local circumstances of the various congregations. Further, it decided that a prompt appeal should be made to our well-to-do members to increase the capital of the Sustentation Fund, as in that way the future needs of the ministers would be best and most fairly provided for. That appeal is to be made personally by members of the Committee appointed for that purpose. The Special Auxiliary Fund provided by the members of the First Congregation, Belfast, is to be administered immediately by the members of the Laymen's Committee formed at the meeting. All this represents a good beginning, but it will need the hearty support of all our members to make it the success hoped for and necessary. Cannot we ensure that?

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Widespread sympathy was called forth by the death of Prince John, the youngest son of the King and Queen. The latter were so closely identified in spirit with the tremendous sufferings caused by the war that it was all the harder when the national burden was lifted for domestic affliction to follow. But never were the hearts of their subjects more closely drawn to them, and if it be any alleviation of suffering to realise that others participate therein, then that is certainly the experience of the Royal Family.

The passing hence of Theodore Roosevelt, the ex-President of the United States of America, was an event of international significance. For many years his words and deeds made him a man of outstanding importance, and his personality made a particularly prompt appeal to the popular imagination. In him the virile, energe ic side of the American genius found full embodiment, and whether as President or Rough Rider he always played the man. What we appreciate most in his latter days was his keen appreciation of the part played by Great Britain in the war, and long before his own country decided to join in he was strenuously advocating its hearty participation. The stirring times through which his country and ours must necessarily pass will sorely need men of his strenuous nature, and he will be greatly missed not alone in America but also in Europe.

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Added to our war experiences we are now to be introduced to the pleasures of industrial differences. As we write these words Belfast is deprived of its gas and electrical supplies, and the simple life is being inaugurated with oil lamps and tallow candles. Sunday's evening service was a test of preparedness and resourcefulness. The churches which, like the foolish virgins, had no oil in their lamps were condemned to inner darkness or a too dim religious light. The more prescient managed, by the aid of lamps and candles, to carry on, with a virtuous feeling that they had at least partially discomfited the powers of darkness. Many reflected on the lack of wisdom which, in a so-called enlightened age, subjects a whole community to serious inconvenience in winter weather because men cannot be reasonable instead of resorting to counsels of despair and foolishness. In the meantime, while we are thus creating antagonisms at home, we are fondly hoping that the deliberations of our representatives abroad are going to resolve grave difficulties, remove causes of international friction, and usher in a period of world-wide peace and prosperity. But it still remains true, in small disputes as in great, that without that wisdom that is from above, which is peaceable, easy to be entreated, there can be nothing done which is likely to last. If we hope for peace abroad, must we not expect men to perceive the utter futility of strikes or lock-outs to bring us industrial concord?

* *

It should not be allowed to pass unnoted that February 8th will commemorate the centenary of the birth of one of the greatest of modern Englishmen. John Ruskin had his birth on February 8th, 1819, and few men played a greater or a nobler part in the nineteenth century than he, his life of varied activity extending till its closing year, 1900. Whether we think of him as an art critic, artist, prose writer of superlative skill, or social reformer, we cannot forget that in all these forms of useful endeavour he was inspired by the noblest and most unselfish of motives. After all, it is the spirit of his life, even more than its varied forms, which give him place and power in the lives of his countrymen. To many he is an inspiring teacher, the creator of great ideals, the giver of sight to eyes once blind to the beauty of the world and the unfading charm of great art and literature. It is well we should think with reverence and gratitude of the fathers who begat us.

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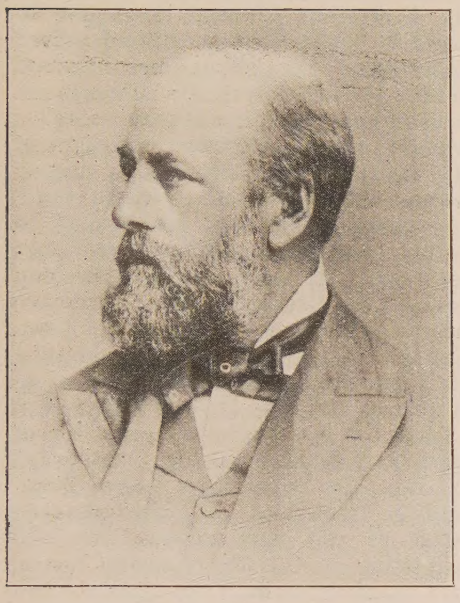
Any of our readers who are interested in the presentation of religion as affected by the war will find much to encourage them in the work of a County Antrim man, Dr. Alexander Irvine. Consisting chiefly of addresses given to British troops in various centres, "God and Tommy Atkins" sets forth a sane, practical kind of religion which is greatly needed to-day. We are not surprised that its author achieved great success. A like simplicity and directness on the part of all teachers would make religious truths far more popular and influential then they commonly appear to be. The Christian Churches generally would be the better for the possession of Dr. Irvine's gifts of insight and appeal.

Memorial Notices.



RIGHT HON. SIR ANDREW MARSHALL PORTER, BART.

The death of the Right Hon. Sir Andrew Marshall Porter, Bart., which took place at Donnycarney House, Dublin, will be greatly regretted by the members of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church.

He was a son of the Rev. John Scott Porter, for many years minister of the First Presbyterian Congregation, Belfast, and Professor of Biblical Criticism and Hebrew to the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Association of Ireland, and who married a daughter of the late Dr. Andrew Marshall, R.N., a distinguished Belfast physician. Sir Andrew was born on the 27th June, 1837, and educated at Queen's College, Belfast, from which he took his degree in the Queen's University, after a highly distinguished undergraduate course. The degrees of M.A. and LL.D., *honoris causa*, were conferred upon him in 1882, and in 1889 the University of Dublin conferred upon the great lawyer the honorary degree of LL.D.

He was called to the Bar in 1860, and became a Queen's Counsel at the very early age of thirty-five. His success as a junior was striking, and the practice which he enjoyed was so large as to tax all his energies. In 1869 he married a Scottish lady of an ancient Peeblesshire family, the daughter of Lieut. Col. Horsbrugh, of Horsbrugh. Of this marriage there was born a family of four sons and two daughters.

1. Helen Violet Porter.

2. John Scott Porter, B.A. (Oxon.), who married Elaine Maud, daughter of Thomas Jefferies, Esq., J.P., of Newbay, Co. Wexford, and has a son, Andrew Marshall Horsbrugh Porter.

3. Alexander Horsbrugh Porter, who married the Hon. Frances Maud Gibson, daughter of the first Baron Ashbourne, and has two sons and a daughter.

4. Andrew Marshall Porter, B.A. (Dublin), a Barrister, who was killed in action at Lindley, South Africa, on the 5th of June, 1900.

5. Margaret Porter, who married Cuthbert Avenal John Vernon, of Portmarnock.

6. William Francis Porter, B.A. (Dubl.), who died in 1903, unmarried.

The loss of his third and fourth sons was a great blow to Sir Andrew M. Porter. They were both distinguished graduates of Trinity College, and gave promise of great future success. Three years after the death of his youngest son he retired from the Bench.

Sir Andrew M. Porter was elected M.P. for Londonderry in 1881, and represented the constituency for two years. During this period he was successively Solicitor and Attorney-General for Ireland. In the end of 1883 he was appointed Master of the Rolls, which high office he filled until 1906, when he retired. So highly did the Government appreciate his talents and his great wisdom that he was strongly pressed to accept the office of Chief Secretary for Ireland at the time of Lord Frederick Cavendish's appointment, with the reversion of the Chancellorship when it became vacant. This offer he declined. His success as an advocate, which was great, was more than eclipsed by his success as a Judge. His judgments were always held in the greatest respect by the rest of the Irish

Judiciary, and were seldom called in question. Prior to his appointment to the Bench in 1883, he was made a Member of the Irish Privy Council, and in 1902 His Majesty conferred a Baronetcy upon him.

Personally Sir Andrew Porter was at all times most popular. His manner was urbane and courteous, and the transparent sincerity of the man inspired universal confidence. He never really recovered from the shock caused by the death of his two sons. On his retirement from the Bench he disposed of his fine library of legal books, and ceased to take any part in public life. Among the names of the greatest eminence on the list of Irish Masters of the Rolls there is none more distinguished than the name of Andrew Marshall Porter.

The funeral took place from Donnycarney House, Co. Dublin, to Dean's Grange Cemetery. The Rev. E. Savell Hicks, M.A., Minister of Stephen's Green Unitarian Congregation, conducted the burial service. The large and representative concourse of mourners showed the universal esteem in which Sir A. M. Porter was held by all creeds and classes.

Sir Andrew M. Porter was descended from one of those families which came to Ireland in the days of the "Plantation of Ulster," and which have contributed so much to the prosperity of the country. The original Irish ancestor settled on a property at Cranny, near Omagh. From him sprang William Porter, of Cranny, whose son, John Porter, of Cranny, died about 1802. This John Porter married as his first wife, Mary Love, of Scarvagherin, Aidstraw, who died in 1770, leaving him with three daughters. He then married Jane Nixon, second daughter of James Nixon (1698–1776), of Loughmuck, near Omagh, and his wife, Ann Marks, of Loughgill, Co. Armagh. John Porter and Jane Nixon had three sons—Rev. William Porter, M.A., of Newtownlimavady; James Porter, of Cranny, and John Porter (1785–1806), who died unmarried. Of these William Porter and his sons, and the son of James Porter, were all destined to play a prominent part in the history of Irish Presbyterianism.

The reaction against the spirit of the Protestant Reformation began to affect Ireland a little over two hundred years ago. For about one hundred years the Presbyterian Church in Ireland was the scene of controversies, which this reactionary tendency against the spirit of the Reformation engendered, and was, from time to time, convulsed by heated discussions on points of doctrine. Many side issues were debated, but throughout the long contest, the essential point of difference was as to whether the teaching of Jesus Christ or the set of doctrines compiled by John Calvin should be the adopted standard of the Irish Presbyterian Church. "The Bible, the only rule of faith and duty," was the watchword of the Non-Subscribers; the Westminster Confession of Faith was the ideal of the Subscribers. At the beginning of the Nineteenth Century the quarrel reached its height, and Rev. William Porter took a leading part in it. In 1829 the fight was over, and William Porter's sons and nephew were for many years champions of the Presbyterian minority which stood firm for the teaching of Jesus.

The Rev. William Porter, M.A. (1774–1843) was minister of Newtownlimavady and Clerk of the Synod of Ulster. Being a "Non-Subscriber," he took an important part in the controversy leading up to the "split" in the Synod in 1829, and was one of the original seventeen Remonstrant ministers who seceded from the Synod rather than sign the Westminster Confession. He was twice married. His first wife was Mary Scott (died 1809), daughter of John Scott, of Mullaghbane, and grand-daughter of James Nixon, of Loughmuck. By her he had four children—Jane (1800-1832), who married James M'Kay, and died in the United States without issue; Rev. John Scott Porter; Hon. William Porter; and Mary Ann (1808-1866), who married Frank Dalzell Finlay, founder of "The Northern Whig," and became the mother of William Finlay, Frank Dalzell Finlay, Henry Mont-

gomery Finlay, Archibald Hamilton Rowan Finlay, and Jane Dalzell Finlay. The latter married Frank Hill, editor of "The Daily News."

The second wife of Rev. William Porter was Eliza Classon (1776-1852), daughter of John Classon, Esq., of Dublin. By her he had four children—Rev. Classon Porter, Rev. James Nixon Porter, Hester Frances Porter, and Francis Porter (1819-1886), who settled in Cape Town, and married, leaving issue. By his two marriages, Rev. William Porter had thus eight children. Four of these require special mention :—

Rev. John Scott Porter (1801-1880), married in 1833 Margaret, eldest daughter of Andrew Marshall, Surgeon R.N., who, on his retirement from the Royal Navy, practised his profession in Belfast. In 1826 John Scott Porter was ordained minister of Carter Lane Congregation, London, a charge which had at one time been held by the saintly Richard Baxter. In 1832 he was installed minister of the First Presbyterian Congregation, Rosemary Street, Belfast, and remained there until his death. He was Professor of Hebrew and Theology under the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Association. A fine scholar, an able controversialist, and a faithful pastor, he was for many years the central figure of his religious denomination in Ireland. His manual of Textual Criticism ranks as a classic. A straightforward, sincere, and pious gentleman, he held for almost fifty years a most important place in the religious, social and political life of Belfast.

Rev. John Scott Porter and Margaret Marshall had eleven children :—

1. Isabella married Alexander O'Driscoll Taylor, and had eight children.
2. Mary Eliza died in infancy.
3. Right Hon. Sir Andrew Marshall Porter, whose death we now deplore.
4. Fanny, who died in childhood.
5. William, who married Margaret Carroll.
6. John Scott, who married Annie, daughter of Edward Churchhill Deane, and had a son and daughter.
7. Drummond died in childhood.
8. Francis Knowles, B.A., Chinese Interpreter, H.M. Consulate, was drowned in China. He was unmarried.
9. James Forsyth was married, but had no issue.
10. Margaret Elizabeth.
11. Drummond married Ellen Lloyd Evelyn, daughter of Andrew M'Creight, Esq., of Armagh, and had two daughters.

Hon. William Porter, C.M.G. (1805-1880), was Attorney-General for the Cape of Good Hope ; Chancellor of the Cape of Good Hope, and Captain of the Capetown Volunteer Cavalry. He was unmarried, and spent his latter days in Belfast, where he died within a week of his brother, Rev. John Scott Porter. His honourable and successful life was spent in the conviction that, as he himself expressed it, the true Christian faith "is not a logical system, but an animating principle."

Rev. Classon Porter (1813-1885) was minister of the Old Presbyterian Congregation, Larne. He was not only an esteemed pastor, but also a distinguished scholar and antiquarian. To him we owe valuable historical accounts of several of the old Non-Subscribing and Remonstrant Presbyterian congregations. He married Eliza Ann Wallace, and had the following children :—

William Porter (1854-1885), who died unmarried ; Robert Wallace Porter (b. 1856), who married Rose Sampson, Cape of Good Hope, and had a family ; and Classon Porter, M.A., Barrister-at-Law, of Dublin.

Rev. James Nixon Porter (1815-1875), was minister of the Non-Subscribing Congregation of Carrickfergus, and subsequently minister of Warrington. He married Ellen, daughter of Judge Stansfeld, and had a daughter and two sons. The younger of them, Ralph Classon Porter, B.Sc., married Annie Dick, and had issue two sons, Stephen Ralph M'Ewen Porter and Patrick Nixon Dick Porter.

We must now revert to James Porter, of Cranny and Loughmuck, son of John Porter, of Cranny, by his second wife, Jane Nixon, and brother of Rev. William Porter, M.A., of Newtownlima-

vady. This James was an officer of Yeomanry, and married Jane Scott, of Mullaghbane, a grand-daughter of James Nixon, of Loughmuck. By her he had two sons and two daughters. His elder son, Rev. John Porter (1800 1874), was minister of the Second Congregation of Protestant Dissenters, Rosemary Street, Belfast, now All Souls', Elmwood Avenue, from his ordination in 1829 until his death. He married Charlotte, daughter of William Gray, Esq., and had a family of eight children.

ADDRESS IN THE MORTUARY CHAPEL.

By Rev. E. S. Hicks, M.A.

The remains of the late Sir Andrew Marshall Porter, Bart., were interred in Dean's Grange Cemetery, on Monday, 13th January. Previous to the interment the Rev. E. Savell Hicks M.A. (Oxon.), minister of Stephen's Green Unitarian Church, of which deceased was an old and devoted member, delivered a short address in the Mortuary Chapel, at which the following were present :—Sir John Scott Porter, Bart.; Mr. Alexander Porter (sons), Miss Porter, Mrs. Vernon (daughters), Mr. Classon Porter (cousin), the Master of the Rolls, Mr. Justice Gibson, Mr. Justice Madden, Mr. Justice Ross, Mr. Justice Wylie, the Solicitor-General, Sir Dunbar Plunket Barton, Bart.; Edward S. Murphy, K.C.; Dudley White, K.C.; John Bartley, and James Andrews, K.C.; S. Shannon Millin, R. B. Falkiner and A. H. Varian, members of Stephen's Green Congregation.

Mr. Hicks said: "There comes a fated time in all our lives when the intricate mechanism of existence halts and breaks down; it has done its part, and is henceforth only fit to dissolve again in the vast reservoir of the world's raw material. It may stop with the suddenness of unexpected catastrophe, or it may gradually slacken in force and speed until the final hour, when it trembles into silence and rest. When that time arrives, and that hour has struck, the sadness of the long farewell descends upon our hearts, and we go back in memory over the thousand tender associations and recollections that are intertwined with a long, active, strenuous life, such as that lived by the friend whose passing onward we now mourn. For some who are gathered here that friendship and comradeship has been of many years' standing, and there will arise the long vista of recollection—old memories, old dreams, old adventures, scraps of conversation held years ago, odd fragments from the life of another which had happened to touch our consciousness; broken rays from his personality which had flashed upon our minds in moments grave or gay, on occasions charged with vital issues, or at times of emotion or of stress. The life of Sir Andrew Marshall Porter has been one full to the brim of vivid interests, varied experience, and important services to the community—faithfully, loyally, and unstintingly rendered. This is not the place, nor am I the person, to speak of those splendid services of a brilliant mind, rendered fearlessly and justly; nor of the long record of a varied career, in which honour and distinction waited upon merit, skill, and integrity. The personality we knew, loved, and respected has journeyed onward into the life beyond, taking with him all those qualities of uprightness, stern sense of duty, evenhanded justice, unprejudiced fairness of mind, the courtesy of a true gentleman, the chivalry of the true knight, and the God-fearing rectutude of a true Christian, which we associate with the name he bore. On one of the last occasions when I had a conversation with Sir Andrew, when the trouble of increasing ill health was deepening with him, he said, "My life has been a long one, and full of interests. God has been very good to me; I have nothing to complain of." For him death had no terror. His faith was firm in that other life, whither, in God's good time, we all must wend our pilgrim way. The ties of love and friendship on earth are severed, but they shall be joined again in the wider life of Heaven.

Which of us does not feel, as the changes of life leave us poorer and sadder, as friend after friend departs over the mysterious borderland of Death, the increasing force of the lines :—

"It seemeth such a little way to me
Across to that strange country—the Beyond ;
And yet, not strange, for it has grown to be
The home of those of whom I am so fond ;
They make it seem familiar and most dear,
As journeying friends bring distant regions near.

So close it lies, that when my sight is clear
I think I almost see the gleaming strand ;
I know I feel those who have gone from here
Come near enough sometimes to touch my hand ;
I often think, but for our veiled eyes,
We should find Heaven right round about us lies.

I never stand above a bier and see
The seal of death set on some well-loved face,
But that I think, 'One more to welcome me
When I shall cross the intervening space
Between this land and that one 'over there' ;
One more to make the strange Beyond seem fair.'

And so for me there is no sting to death,
And so the grave has lost its victory,
It is but crossing—with a bated breath,
And white, set face—a little strip of sea,
To find the loved ones waiting on the shore,
More beautiful, more precious than before."

In the spirit of trust and confidence in which our Master, Jesus Christ, has taught us, and with love and affection in our hearts, we commit our dear friend to the care and safe keeping of Almighty God.

The coffin was then removed from the chapel, and lovingly placed in the family grave, at the side of which Mr. Hicks conducted the burial service. On the conclusion of the service the sad company dispersed, and, amid surroundings of sylvan beauty, extending to the graceful peaks of the Wicklow Mountains, left the mortal remains of a great and a good man.

MR. STANLEY BELL,
BANBRIDGE.

The Banbridge Congregation has suffered a great loss through the death of Mr. Stanley Bell, of Ballydown. Mr. Bell succumbed to pneumonia following influenza. A member of a family long connected with the church, he took a great interest and pride in all its activities. He was for many years a member of the choir; he helped to form the Young People's Guild, and was the leading spirit of the Dramatic Society, which ably produced, under his supervision, many highly enjoyable plays and sketches. Last year he was appointed collector of the Sustentation Fund, and he succeeded in obtaining many new subscribers. He was of a kindly and cheerful disposition, ever thoughtful of others, and devoted to his home. He was proud of his Unitarian faith, and he adorned that faith by the nobility and uprightness of his character. Religion was a very real thing to Stanley; it bore him safely through the many temptations that beset the path of every young man, and it upheld him in the agony of death. He fought a gallant battle against the deadly disease which overtook him; he earnestly desired to live on and serve his day and generation ; but death held no terror for him ; he died as he lived, with courage and faith. When he realised that the disease had obtained the mastery, and while the shadows were gathering, he expressed his joy at the prospect of meeting his dear sisters who had preceded him beyond the veil, and calmly bade a last farewell to his people and the host of friends he left behind.

Stanley was a splendid type of young manhood—pure, kindly, upright, and always ready to do what he could in any good cause, and the circles in which he was wont to move will miss him for many a long day. The home at Ballydown has lost a loving son and a devoted brother, and we pray that the great Father may comfort the family in their bitter sorrow, and give them strength to look beyond the cloud to where shines the light immortal.

His remains were laid to rest in the family burial ground at the Old Meeting-house Green. The funeral was unusually large and representative, and testified to his popularity in the town and district. Many beautiful wreaths were laid on his grave, amongst which was one from the Banbridge Congregation, and another from the Young People's Guild.

MRS. JOHN KELLY,
BALLEE.

We regret to announce the removal from our midst of Mrs. Kelly, Ballyalton, Downpatrick, mother of Rev. J. A. Kelly, of Dunmurry. She was a devoted member of Ballee, as were her forbears. The passing into the higher life was not unlooked for by reason of her great age, and in these later days of much infirmity. The deceased, who had almost completed her 84th year, had enjoyed sound health up till a year or two ago. The largely attended funeral on Friday, the 17th January, showed in a degree the esteem in which she was held. The services at the house and church were conducted by the minister (Rev. J. H. Bibby). The deceased was of a retiring temperament, but her spirit was that of one whose life made for goodness all round her. Her conversation was kind and sympathetic. She was very seldom critical of the character or conduct of other people. She could be trusted always and everywhere for discreetness of behaviour and charitableness of speech. She was by no means devoid of humour, or incapable of pleasantry, but her judgments of events, people, and characters were ever kindly, wise, and generous. As long as strength enabled her she was habitual in attendance on religious public worship. She had a healthy horror of all that approached cant or hyprocrisy in religion, and in all things her honesty was clear as daylight. A death like this loses much of its bitterness when the spirit is released from an aged body—a worn out frame no longer fit for its home on earth. It almost seems as if there were nothing else left for our aged friend to do but to die. May her memory keep green among us.

SOCIAL SERVICE NOTES.

[The Editor has courteously placed the space under this heading at the disposal of the N.S.P.C.I. Union for ocial Service, and the Union will supply material for it regularly every month.]

The Social and Personal Implications of the Christian Idea of Personality.

What a difference it would make, if, in our dealings with our fellow-men we always regarded all men and women as being essentially of divine origin, and as having immortal souls and eternal destinies! Should we then grind men down body and soul under the ruthless wheels of industry? Should we ever regard them as mere cogs in the industrial machine? Should we ever slight anyone, much less degrade anyone? There would be no more sweating, no more over-work and underpay, no more poverty, no more bad housing, no more inhumanity of man to man, no more war. And if we could all take up this attitude toward ourselves, there would be no more sin, no more drunkenness, no more lying, no more bestiality; we should feel that we are indeed the temple of God, and we should dread to defile that temple in which He dwells. This is Christianity and, to my understanding, no other religion approaches it in insight and penetration, and in conveying just the same profound respect for each man's and each woman's soul, or inmost part of them.—"Principles of Social Reconstruction," by Rev. H. H. Johnson, B.A.

* *

The Social Service Union and Party Politics.

I am not so narrow-minded as to believe that any one party has the monoply of social consciousness. Moreover, since all parties are by their nature limited in scope and outlook, it would be most foolish to tie down the wide-sweeping purposes of social redemption to any political party. Social redemption is essentially a Christian duty, and is above all parties. Political parties are, or should be, the MEANS whereby we seek to embody our cherished ideals in laws and institutions. The Church is, or should be, the SOURCE of our cherished ideals. If the Church does not inspire us with social ideals, then the Church fails entirely to be Christian. The members of our Union must bear in mind the

fact that they are members because of their desire to be Christians, not to grind any partizan axe. The intention of the Union is not to convert men from their political parties, but so to inspire them with the spirit of Christ that they will work their hardest to get the best social results possible out of their parties. For a long time yet we shall belong to different camps; but let us at once realize at once that we all belong to one fold."—Rev. E. H. Pickering, M.A., at All Souls' Church, Belfast, 19th January, 1919.

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A Public Meeting to inaugurate the Union for Social Service will be held in the Central Hall, Rosemary Street, Belfast, on Wednesday, 19th February, at 8 p.m., when the following will speak:—Rev. H. H. Johnson, B.A., of Evesham, Secretary of the National Conference Union for Social Service; Mrs. J. Glyn Davies, and Mr. R. Campbell Ferguson Farquhar, M.A., LL.B., Secretary of the C.O.S. (Belfast); chairman, the Moderator. All members of our Church are earnestly requested to make a special effort to be present.

LESSON NOTES FOR TEACHERS.

[To be used in accordance with the Scheme of Instruction for 1919, issued by the Sunday School Committee of the N.S.P.C.I.]

February 2nd. The House on the rock (good foundations). Read Matthew vii. 21-27. Key text, Matthew vii. 24.

1. *The Parable.* There is scarcely a parable forms so striking a picture as this. There we see the storm raging, the sea mountains high, and the house of the foolish man, built on the level, shifting sands with no foundations, swept away a complete wreck; whilst the house wisely built on the firm rock, high above the level of the sea, stands firmly amidst the storm, affording a refuge and strength to him who built it. The reason why so many old houses still remain in good condition, even for hundreds of years after they were built, whilst many fairly modern houses begin to show signs of wear and tear within a few years, is that the former have sound foundations, going deep into the ground, foundations which in many cases cost more money, time and trouble than the rest of the building; whilst the latter have scarcely any foundation at all—just a few days' work of digging, and a few feet of brickwork loosely placed in the unsettled earth.

2. *The storms of life.* Many folk are quick enough to see that only a house firmly founded can stand firm against the storm, but they do not see that we also have to face the storms of life. The storms of life are not always recognised as such, but everything is a storm which threatens to bring a man low; that is, make him a weak, wicked, foolish, unreliable, unworthy creature. Thus, every temptation is a storm, whether we are tempted to be angry, cruel, impure and dishonest, or to be idle, selfish and mean.

3. *The key text.* There were in our Lord's day, just as in ours, many foolish people, who thought that they were good if they only talked a lot about goodness, or if they just called themselves Christians without acting like Christians. These are the very folk who cannot stand up against the storms of life. Our whole life is a test, an examination, if you like, of the stuff we are made of. Those who are made of cheap stuff, and have no real grounding in life's demands, will soon topple down. Mere talking, merely saying "I believe this or that," mere coming to church and school, are no foundations. No, we not only have to believe in God, we have to strive to *do* the will of God if we would stand. Those who do the will of God are like the house built on the rock.

4. *Good foundations.* Every boy and girl must build up his or her life on good foundations. These good foundations consist (1) in sound principles, such as honesty, hard work, kindness, purity and love. Its no use winning unless we win honestly; success is empty which we do not deserve; pleasure is degrading if we smirch our body and mind, and nothing worth while will result unless we show love and kindness to those about us. But (2), these sound principles have no

meaning until we have proved them by our deeds. It is easy to say "I will not tell a lie," but these words become a good foundation when we actually have told the truth. Every day we should strive to show by our deeds that we really are Christians, and then we shall be all the stronger to resist temptations, no matter how severe. Just as a man becomes a great athlete by hard practice every day, so we become sound Christians by training ourselves every day in Christian behaviour. If we would stand, then we must have made ourselves strong by fixing ourselves firmly on the rock of regular practice.

February 9. *The Broad and Narrow Path* (*self denial*). Read Matthew vii. 13, 14. Key text, Matt. vii. 14.

1. *The Two Paths.* This is a very brief parable, but it presents most wonderfully the difference between the right and wrong way of life. We only have to look at a smooth, broad, level road to realize how preferable it is for walking on than a narrow, steep, and rugged mountain path. If all we were wanting was easy walking, then the path to choose is the broad one. But it may be that we want to breathe the fresh mountain air, and to feast our eyes on the goodly sights which only a mountain top can give; and then for us to choose the broad path because it was easier walking, would be a miserable surrender to our selfishness. What would any boy say to any other who said he was not going to climb up a glorious hill, but preferred to go round by the road because it was easier? He would shout after the lazy walker along the broad path, "you miserable slacker!" Why, every boy knows that it is the greatest sport in life to seek adventure and enjoy new sights by struggling along the narrow paths. He does not expect to enjoy anything worth while without hard work and the sacrifice of his bodily ease. So it is in life generally. If we always keep to the broad path we become flabby, selfish and dull. If, however, we wish to achieve anything, we have to take the narrow path and practice self-denial.

2. *Christian self-denial.* Christianity demands unlimited self-denial, because it promises us the greatest joys. What better than to become really good men and women? What better than to live in an atmosphere of love for those around us? What better than to feel God always about us, revealing all sorts of wonderful beauties and joys in the world and among our friends? What better than to be able to look cheerily forward to the end of this life, knowing that God will say, "Well done, good and faithful servant," and will promote us to a higher and nobler life in Heaven? But just because Christianity promises these great joys, it asks of us severe self-denial. We have to work for our great reward. We cannot be good unless we deny ourselves base pleasures and selfish passions. We cannot be loving unless we do all we can to help those we love. We must choose the narrow path. This does not mean that life will be dreary and gloomy. On the contrary, we shall find life all the happier the more we deny ourselves. Are those men miserable who embark on great adventures and discoveries, and who endure untold hardships in their quest? By no means; they are happy because they are climbing high. To be Christians we have to climb high; but the higher we climb, and the more we give up the happier we shall be. There is a story about a bright little girl who was always helpful, and whom everybody loved. One day she was asked why everybody loved her. "I don't know," she said, "unless its because I love everybody." She found the narrow path easy, because she was loving. If we love we shall find it easy too, or, at least, we shall be so happy in our good and useful life that we shall never notice all the hardships.

February 16. *The Cup* (*self denial*). Read Metthew xx. 20-28. Key text, Matt. xx. 28.

1. *The ambitious mother.* The fault of the mother of James and John was that in her motherly desire to secure the best places for her sons, she forgot many important things. Jesus was not hard on her, because he respected her deep affection, but he felt compelled

to show her what she had forgotten. In the first place, like most of our Lord's followers, she thought that his kingdom was something like the kingdoms of the world generally, with pomp and power luxury and high places for his chief followers; whereas, as we shall see later, his kingdom was entirely different. Also, she forgot the true nature of Christian discipleship. Jesus reminded her of this by means of the parable of the Cup.

2. *The Cup.* Our Lord's first concern with his disciples is that they should be willing to drink of the same cup as himself. In those days, far more than now, it was a sign of intimate friendship to drink out of the same cup. Thus, when two men made a pledge of loyalty, they drank out of the same cup to show that henceforth they were of one mind, and that one could not betray the other without utter self-degradation. That is why we drink out of the cup at Holy Communion, to pledge ourselves to try to be loyal to our Lord, the unseen host. James and John declared that they were willing to drink of the same cup as Jesus, and thus undergo all that loyalty to him demanded; but, as Jesus clearly told him, their self-denial must go even further. He wanted their help, but promised no honours and distinctions. That was for God to decide. It is for some to receive great honour and distinction, whilst others must be content with a lowly place.

3. *The rule of the kingdom.* In the kingdom of God, however, there will be no wrangling over the best places. Christians will not measure their importance in the kingdom according to their power to order other folk to wait on them. On the contrary, the chief Christians will be the most devoted servants of their fellow men. The greatest of all in the kingdom is Christ himself; why? Because he is the most devoted servant of mankind, even to laying down his life for us (see key text). Following in his steps, we shall find our greatest joy in making ourselves as useful and helpful to those about us as it is possible to be.

February 23.—Review. E. H. P.

SIX MONTHS IN A GERMAN PRISONER OF WAR CAMP.

II. CAMP LIFE.

By Rev. P. Godding, Second Lieut.

Let me attempt a description of the first day, though it was not at the camp. We arrived at one o'clock in the morning. I do not believe any of us had ever been so tired in all our lives as we were then. We were allocated three rooms (about 100 of us), and in those rooms were beds. Oh, reader, you do not know what it is to enjoy a bed when you have one to go to night after night! The two blankets were verminous; the mattress was made of shavings pressed down thoroughly hard. But what did that matter, I was asleep before I took my putties off! And they awakened us—no easy task—at 3 a.m. We rubbed our eyes in bewilderment, for before each of us was a large bowl of delicious barley soup. At 8 o'clock we had the same again, with the addition of a piece of bread, and at mid-day more soup and another piece of bread, and at 5 p.m a cup of tea and still another piece of bread! Why do I record this? Because that was the biggest feast we were destined to enjoy for the next 3½ months, that is, until the food parcels arrived from the Ulster Women's Gift Fund.

There was a smell in that room disgusting beyond description. Some were sick at the mere sight of the room. I know it was the worst piece of sanitation, or rather lack of sanitation, that I had ever seen; but let me tell it at once, and I wont refer to it again. The sanitation in what was to be my permanent camp was simply wretched and unhealthy to the extreme. Ours was an officers' camp. I wonder what a soldiers' camp was like! We had some doctors with us of the R.A.M.C., who of course, complained, and occasionally something was done by the authorities, but at its best it was more horrible than would have been at all tolerated at home. My permanent camp was just 3 min. from the rooms we were in, and we entered it at 6 o'clock that evening—my "home" for the next six months.

On arrival here we had forms to fill in, giving particulars of our regiment, relatives, etc., which were required, we were told, by the Red Cross and by the War Office, for purposes of identification. Also we were allowed, at last, to write a card for home! Imagine how eager and anxious we were to send these cards. Mine arrived in Ballyclare eight weeks later. This camp was an old soldiers' barracks. It had a small courtyard about 100 yards square. There were about 100 French and 30 English officers already there when we arrived, and having been given two blankets and a towel, we distributed ourselves where there were vacant beds. There were orderlies in this camp—that is those British Tommies and N.C.O's who had the fortune to escape the physical and mental torture endured by those who had to work behind "the lines" or in the salt mines. Well, the first thing I did was to give my underclothing to one of these orderlies, who said he could wash them for me. My socks were in a very sad state, but I did not get another pair until I had been there four months.

I must tell you that that camp was a distributing camp; that is to say, officers stayed there for a week or ten days till moved to the particular "permanent" camp designated for them. But I was destined to stay there as permanent camp chaplain, or padré, as they called me. Of that wonderful and beautiful experience I will tell you in my next article.

But it was a real, real prison camp. High banks all round (about 30 or 40 feet), with barbed wire at the top, and sentry boxes, with sentries pacing slowly along with their bare bayonets. And two huge iron gates! Two sentries and a watch dog at that gate. We should have been allowed out for walks once or twice a week—that is an international agreement. You know, though, that our enemy never bothered themselves about agreements. So we had to be content with the sight of those walls and wire, and we had to walk round and round that courtyard. Still the same blue sky was above us, as was above our loved ones at home. There was consolation in that thought and all that it meant. Twice a day (at unknown hours) we had to fall in for "appel," or roll call. We were paraded by a German sergeant-major, and called to attention when the swaggering officer came in view. Some days we had to stand on parade for over an hour. Just one incident, really typical, to help you to understand the "way" of these "gentlemen" over us. A French officer was having his head dressed (a painful wound), when he went to rest and fell asleep. He did not hear the appel whistle. So he was absent from appel. They sent a German orderly to find him. He was brought on parade, had to stand at attention before the officer, who shouted and screamed at him for daring to be late. Result—6 days' cells. Four "meals" a day. Breakfast—Coffee and a piece of bread. The coffee was roasted acorns. Lunch—Cabbage soup (that is, cabbage and the water it was boiled in—of course the cabbage had not been washed—I tasted the gritty soil). Tea—was tea and bread (tea was dandelion juice); then dinner—Cabbage soup again. Twice a week we had barley soup, and once meat. The meat was a small piece of horse flesh about the size of a two shilling piece. But we enjoyed all our food because we were always so hungry.

We amused ourselves by teaching the French English, and they taught us French. We chummed up, and I believe every English officer had a French chum. It was useful as well as enjoyable, for we learnt about each other as we could not have done any other way. After we had been there 3 months they gave us a piano, then a miniature billiard table. Still later, they sent English books (the Tauchnitz edition) into the canteen, and so we could buy them. And I started a lending library, and collected over 500 volumes. We were allowed to cash cheques (at a ruinous rate of exchange, of course), and then we could buy tins of fish, and biscuits at the canteen—7/6 for a tin of fish that YOU would never dream of eating, weight about half a pound (including tin). We also

had debates, and studied Mills' "Liberty." [Liberty! wasn't it a lovely subject to "talk about?"]

Now let me tell you of a much brighter and really helpful side of our life here. Especially of the help afforded by the Swedish Y.M.C.A., my friendship with the representative, and what resulted. Shall we call it "Unitarianism in a Prison Camp?"

REPORTS.

Unity Guild.—What proved to be a most successful evening was passed on 10th January at the Annual Soiree. Whether the cessation of hostilities has put people into a holiday mood one does not know, but the fact remains that it was undoubtedly one of the best and heartiest soirees the Guild has ever had. Not only was there an unusually large attendance, but all seemed bent upon enjoyment, and that coldness which unfortunately sometimes characterises the meetings, was entirely absent. Proceedings opened with a whist drive, which was rather late in starting, as some of the guests were not up to time, and at the beginning some slight confusion was caused owing to there being a much larger assembly than had been expected. However, when the people settled down to play, things moved smoothly enough, and the last hand was finished within ten minutes of the appointed hour. After a dainty supper, which was served upstairs, the company returned to find the hall had been cleared for dancing, which was kept up till 1 a.m. Everyone entered into this part of the programme most heartily, and it was not till about midnight one noticed that some had slipped away. The great majority stayed till the close, and all agreed that an extremely jolly evening had been spent.

A lantern lecture will be delivered in York Street Hall on 12th February. The lecturer will be the Rev. A. O. Ashworth, who has taken for his subject "A Trip to Donegal."

* *

Belfast—All Souls' Church.—The Sale of Work held by the Ladies' Sewing Society on 6th December was the most successful that the Society has had for a good many years. The attendance was excellent, especially in the evening, when Rosemary Hall was quite filled. The amount realized was about £70, after payment of all expenses. During the evening the "Pageant of Victory and Peace" was delightfully rendered by members and friends of the congregation. The "Pageant" was specially written and composed by Rev. E. H. Pickering, M.A., minister, and Mr. Teasdale Griffiths, F.R.C.O., organist of All Souls' Church.

On 8th December the Rev. E. H. Pickering was presented by members of the congregation with a wallet containing £80 in Treasury notes, as a mark of esteem and personal affection, and in recognition of his work in connection with All Souls' Church. Mr. Pickering expressed his grateful thanks to the members for their generous and unexpected gift, and said it would be an incentive to further exertions on his part to promote the welfare of the congregation. The presentation was made in a simple and quite informal manner.

* *

Banbridge.—On Friday evg., January 10th, the Annual Sunday School Soiree was held in the Dunbar Schools. There was a large attendance of scholars and friends. When tea had been partaken of, Miss A. M'Caw presented the prizes to the scholars who had a record of attendance throughout the past year. Following this Mr. Sam Shields appeared in the role of Father Christmas. He apologised for his somewhat late arrival this year, and proceeded to present each person present with a toy. After an hour spent in the enjoyment of various games, the party came to an end with the singing of the National Anthem and Auld Lang Syne.

* *

Greyabbey.—At a Committee Meeting, held on the 6th December, Mr. Wm. Taylor, on behalf of the Committee, presented the Minister with £31, collected by them from the members of the congregation. Mr. Taylor, in

making the presentation, said that this sum had been most willingly subscribed by the members as a slight return for the care and attention Mr. Tilson had given them. Mr. Tilson thanked the Committee for their kind thought, and expressed his deep appreciation of the generosity of the congregation. Valuable as the money was, he valued yet more the kind thought, of which it was the expression.

* *

Larne.—Very sincere sympathy is felt here and in many other quarters with Mr. John M'Ninch, elder in our congregation, on the death of the last of his three sons, Mr. John M'Ninch, jun., of Belfast. The sad event occurred on December 2nd, from pneumonia following influenza. Our young friend was in the prime of life, and had proved himself an excellent business man in several counties. He leaves a wife and two children of tender years to mourn his loss, with his father and other relatives and troops of friends, for it may be said that he passed away "loving all and beloved by all" who knew him.

On Thursday evening, 14th November, a special Thanksgiving Service was held in the Old Meeting-house, Larne, when the Rev. James Kennedy, in eloquent words, made reference to the signing of the armistice, and the hopes of permanent peace. Special music was given on the organ by Mr. Holmes, and solos were sung by Mrs W. R. Drummond and Miss Mary Campbell, and were very highly appreciated. After the service advantage was taken of the opportunity to mark the fortieth anniversary of the Rev. James Kennedy's installation as minister. On the motion of Mr. D. A. Nelson, seconded by Mr. William Rea, the chair was taken by Mr. James Morrow, J.P., who, in an interesting speech, gave many details in the history of the congregation up to the installation of the present minister. Subsequently he expressed the gratification he felt that the members of the congregation had taken steps to testify in a tangible manner to their appreciation of their minister's long and faithful service, and called on the hon. treasurer, Mr. D. A. Nelson, to make the presentation, which consisted of a cheque for a substantial amount. Mr. Kennedy, in a characteristic and felicitous speech, referred at some length to his early associations with the members of his own congregation and neighbouring ministers, and thanked the members of his congregation and other well-wishers who had afforded him such a pleasant surprise.

On Sunday afternoon, 22nd December, at the Old Presbyterian Church of Larne and Kilwaughter, an augmented choir, under the leadership of Mr. E. Holmes, gave an excellent rendering of Jamoneau's cantata, "The Saviour of Men," Farmer's "Te Deum," and a carol published by the great society looking after the interests of blinded soldiers and sailors (for which cause a liberal collection was taken up). Solo parts in the cantata were taken by Miss Marie H. Wilson (Straid), Mrs. W. R. Drummond (Miss Mollie Austin), Mr. John Burton, and Mr. Fred English, and, in addition, Miss Wilson gave a beautiful rendering of Pugh-Evans' setting of "Lead, Kindly Light," and Mr. Burton of the solos, "Comfort ye" and "Every Valley," from the "Messiah." Mr. F. Duffell gave excellent service at the organ, and the Rev. James Kennedy led in prayer, and also made an eloquent appeal on behalf of the work for our blinded heroes.

* *

Templepatrick. — This congregation has sustained a regrettable loss in the death of Robert, youngest son of the late Robert Barnett, of Kilgreel. The end came suddenly and unexpectedly on 28th November as the result of complications following an attack of influenza. Deceased, who was 52 years of age, unmarried, and a farmer by occupation, lived a quiet and unostentious kind of life, finding satisfaction in the faithful discharge of the daily task, the common round. He was a staunch supporter of the Old Presbyterian Congregation in Templepatrick, as were his forefathers for generations, and he served its cause loyally by a

regular attendance at Sunday worship, and by occupying from time to time a place on its committee. Though never pressing forward to a conspicuous place in any of the affairs of life, he nevertheless made lots of friends, and secured for himself the kind of popularity which is based upon genuine affection. We tender our sincere sympathy to his sister, with whom he lived, and to the other members of the bereaved family.

A number of Reports are unavoidably held over.

MARRIAGE.

BRADLEY—HILL.—On New Year's Day, 1919, at All Souls' Church, Elmwood, Belfast, by the Rev. Alex. Osborne Ashworth, Robert Frederick Charles Bradley, 2nd Australian Command Depot, son of Mrs. Bradley, Burwood, Sydney, N.S.W., and the late Wm. George Bradley, to May Victoria Hill, youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Hill, Elaine Street, Stranmillis, Belfast.

DEATH.

BELL.—December 18th, at his father's residence, Ballydown, Banbridge, Stanley P., dearly beloved son of Samuel and Nannie Bell.

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